Rural Planning Organization (RPO) Program in Utah

Purpose: UDOT recognizes the value of multimodal planning in the rural area of the state. Some areas that are designated rural today are experiencing growth pressures that will make them urban within the next ten to twenty years. This growth provides opportunities for state and local government with the responsibility to provide important transportation infrastructure to meet growing travel demand. Utah's RPO Program is intended to help these emerging areas understand the linkage between transportation and land use so that they can plan for and be better situated to minimize the future challenges associated with providing a safe and efficient transportation system.

The following is to present guidelines for UDOT Planning and Systems Planning and Programming to implement and administer the RPO Program and prioritize RPO request from local governments.

- Program Goals
- Program Funding
- RPO Selection Screening Process
- Application Process
- RPO Deliverables
- UDOT Deliverables

Program Goals

- Assist rural local governments to understand the linkage between land use and transportation.
- Provide partnership between the RPO and UDOT that preserves and protects the future State Highway System Right of Way (ROW) and that provides for a safe and efficient highway system in the future.
- Encourage Local Government partnerships and consider county wide and regional transportation planning in the development of an RPO.
- Develop and promote communication and better understanding of rural local government priorities.
- Identify short term, medium term, and long-term projects for UDOT's Long Range Plan.
- UDOT expects that the multimodal planning process the Department helped initiate will grow into a continuing and coordinated process with regular plan updates using local funds as the primary source.
- UDOT expects the program will develop strong relationships, understanding, and open communication between the Department, the Regions and participating local governments of the RPO.

Program Funding

• The Department will fund no more than three RPOs in any budget year due to anticipated needs for planning funds.

- The Department's maximum program funding will be \$120,000 annually and the source is State Planning and Research (SPR) funds (federal funds). This requires a minimum local government 20 percent match (non-federal funds).
- The Department shall program SPR funds for each RPO as described in the table below. The local government match, also described below is \$10,000 per year for five years. This funding, plus match, provides a five-year RPO budget of \$160,000.

Table 1

	UDOT SPR Funding	Local Government Match	Total Funds per Year
Year 1	\$40,000	\$10,000	\$50,000
Year 2	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
Year 3	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
Year 4	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
Year 5	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
***************************************	\$110,000	\$50,000	\$160,000

• At the end of year five, UDOT's funding commitment ends, but expects that the planning process, partnering, and communication will continue.

RPO Selection Screen

- UDOT Region agrees with Local Government request for RPO and willing to commit advisory staff to project.
- Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB) population growth projections may bring MPO designation in 15 20 years.
- Study boundary defined by UDOT Planning, proposed RPO, and UDOT Region. Study boundary may be defined by city boundary, county boundary, partnership of cities, or partnership of counties, etc. united together with a common vision.
- The Letter of Intent from county/city executive and council describing origins of local government match with commitment to complete project. Letter of Intent must include Local Government/Agency Partnering Agreement defining roles and responsibilities of participating partners.

Application Process

- Draft Scope of Work that meets UDOT's requirements, schedule, scope and budget.
- Memorandum of Understanding between RPO, and adjacent MPO describing agreement, study boundary, staffing plan, deliverables and schedule.
- Consultants may be used as technical advisor; however, the contract and scope must meet UDOT requirements, schedule, scope, and budget; funding levels remain the same.
- New RPO application and agreements must be to UDOT for consideration by March 31 of each year for UDOT Work Program and funding consideration.

RPO Deliverables

- Access Management Agreement between local governments and UDOT to protect
 the future ROW needs of the state system and provide for a safe and efficient
 highway system in the future.
- Local government matching funds for the five years of project as described in Table 1.
- RPO Program Manager
- Organize and maintain a regional transportation policy **and\or** technical committee.
- Develop and maintain a Long Range Transportation Plan.
- Coordinate with UDOT Region and UDOT Planning in developing project priorities for the state highway system.
- Participate, as necessary, with regional planning activities considered in the county.
- Collect data on traffic volumes, capital improvements, proposed development and land use changes necessary to predict future travel demand.
- Use the RPO Long Range Plan as the source document to develop an RPO
 Transportation Improvement Program that defines RPO transportation and
 enhancement project priorities for UDOT consideration in the annual State
 Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process.

UDOT Deliverables

- SPR fund for five years of project as described in Table 1.
- UDOT Project Manager, UDOT staff from the Region and Planning that the RPO can use as a source for guidance and technical evaluation.
- Traffic data and histories from traffic on Utah highways.
- Maintenance and preservation data for the state highway system.
- Technical guidance and review.
- RPO Application Process and Draft Scope of Work.
- RPO Program in Utah application process posted on UDOT web site along with a staff contact.